



Dear Friends,

The newsletter went to print before the horrific events of September 11, and I wanted to share a few thoughts with you as well as encourage your comments and suggestions.

To those of you whose loved ones were lost or injured, you have my deepest sympathy and offers of help. To the firefighters, law enforcement and emergency personnel, we appreciate your bravery and sacrifice more than we can ever express. If I personally or my staff can do anything for you, we stand ready to respond immediately.

I joined with my colleagues to immediately authorize \$40 billion to provide assistance to the victims of the attacks, including expedited tax relief and benefits to victims and their families; "counter, investigate, or prosecute domestic or international terrorism;" increase transportation security; repair public facilities and transportation systems; and improve national security. We also voted to give the President the authority to use "all necessary and appropriate force" against those responsible for the attacks launched against the United States.

It was such a relief to come home from Washington and hug my husband, children and grandchildren, including newborn grandson William. It is at such moments that one understands what is truly precious in life. Clearly family comes first.

As an American family, we have some important decisions to make. We must decide on the specific actions to take to guarantee our safety and security in the future, to help a faltering economy made worse by this terrorist attack, and to bring to justice the perpetrators. **As we make those decisions, we must ask one question again and again: Will this action achieve our goals of safety, security and justice?**

We need to take a deep breath, move cautiously, and consider all the consequences. Here are a few of the areas of concern:

- **The use of force.** The might of the United States is great and we must use it carefully and surgically to eliminate terrorist threats, making sure that those who are responsible, and only those, pay the price.
- **Protecting American freedom.** We must allocate all necessary resources to restore the lost sense of security that has been such an important part of American life, without violating the freedoms that make us proud to be Americans. Security measures at airports, on airplanes, and in public buildings may be irritating, but, in my view, both acceptable and necessary. Intrusions into private communications, however, must be thoughtfully debated and caution taken before we expand the government's right to step in.
- **Bigotry and hate crimes.** This is a time for Americans to come together, not turn on each other. There have been disturbing acts of bigotry and violence against Muslims, Arab Americans, Sikhs, and Jews. We must all take a strong stand against this in our own communities. That is why on September 16, I sponsored a "Solidarity Walk on Devon Avenue" that drew hundreds of people of all races, religions and national origins who joined hands and sang "God Bless America." We should also move quickly to pass the Hate Crimes Protection Act as an expression of our tolerance as Americans.
- **Spending priorities.** There are many economic consequences of this disaster. There are many industries and businesses that have been affected and may be legitimately coming to the taxpayers for help. But as we rethink our national funding priorities, we must remember that senior citizens still need relief from the high cost of prescription drugs, children still need us to invest in their education, and Social Security and Medicare still need to be protected. All of these needs must be considered.

These are difficult days and the future is not certain. Sad to say, all of us need to be on high alert. But what is certain is that America is strong and America is brave. Just think of the hundreds of safety workers who ran with open eyes into harm's way in order to rescue a stranger, many of them perishing themselves. America is strong enough to bring security to our people and to be a force for justice and peace around the world.

God bless America. Let us all pray for peace.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jan Schakowsky".